

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A data processing network, comprising:

5 a first printer connected to a network medium;

a set of print clients connected to the network medium, wherein each print client is enabled to permit a user to submit a print job to the first printer;

10 a first print job table to store information indicative of first printer capacity available to the user, the first print job table being stored in a computer readable medium; and

computer code means for determining whether to accept a new print job submitted by the user based on a comparison of the size of the new print job and the user's available first
15 printer capacity.

2. The network of claim 1, wherein the available capacity information is indicative of the difference between a print quota associated with the user and the remaining size of all pending print jobs submitted by the user.

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3. The network of claim 1, wherein the code means further includes code means for updating the available capacity information.

4. The network of claim 3, wherein the code means for updating the available capacity
25 information includes code means for periodically adjusting the available capacity information of each user based on an approximation of the amount of print processing that has occurred since a previous period.

5. The network of claim 3, wherein the code means for updating the available capacity
30 information is further characterized as code means for determining the actual amount of capacity required to process the user's pending print jobs.

6. The network of claim 3, wherein the code means for updating the available capacity information includes code means for deleting a first print job table entry corresponding to the user responsive to determining that the user's available first printer capacity is equal to or greater
5 than a predetermined threshold.

7. The network of claim 1, wherein the first print job table includes an entry for every user authorized to submit print jobs to the first printer.

10 8. The network of claim 1, further comprising code means for rejecting a newly submitted print job if the size of the print job exceeds a predetermined maximum print job size associated with the printer.

15 9. The network of claim 1, further comprising a second printer connected to the network and available to the user for submitting print jobs and a second print job table to store information indicative of second printer capacity available to the user, the second print job table being stored in a computer readable medium.

20 10. The network of claim 1, further comprising a first print server connected between the network medium and the first printer, wherein the first print job table and the computer code means are stored in a storage medium of the first print server.

25 11. The network of claim 1, wherein the first print job table and the computer code means are stored in a storage medium of the first printer.

12. A computer program product comprising a set of computer executable instructions for managing print jobs within a data processing network, the instructions being stored in a computer readable medium, comprising:

30 computer code means for detecting the submission of a new print job to a first network connected printer by a user;

computer code means for responding to the submission by determining the size of the new print job and rejecting the new print job if the size exceeds a maximum size corresponding to the first printer; and

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computer code means for comparing the size of the print job to the first printer capacity available to the user and processing the print job based on the comparison, wherein the first printer capacity available to the user is indicative of the size of any pending first print jobs of the user.

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13. The computer program product of claim 12, wherein the code means for comparing includes code means for accessing a first print job table containing a set of entries wherein each entry corresponds to a respective user and is indicative of the size of any pending print jobs submitted by the user.

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14. The computer program product of claim 13, wherein the code means for comparing further includes code means for modifying the first print job table to reflect changes in the size of any pending print jobs submitted by the user.

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15. The computer program product of claim 14, wherein the code means for modifying the first print job table includes code means for deleting a user's entry in the first print job table responsive to determining that the user's available capacity is equal to or greater than a threshold value.

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16. The computer program product of claim 14, wherein the code means for modifying the first print job table to reflect changes in the size of any pending print jobs includes code means for estimating progress made on the pending print jobs based at least in part on the amount of time elapsed since submission of the print job.

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17. A print job processing device for use in a data processing network, comprising:

means for communicating with a set of print clients via a network medium to enable a user to submit a print job to a first network attached printer via the print job processing device;

5 a first print job table to store information indicative of first printer capacity available to the user, the first print job table being stored in a computer readable medium of the print job processing device; and

10 computer code means for determining whether to accept a new print job submitted to the first printer by the user based on a comparison of the size of the new print job and the user's available first printer capacity.

15 18. The print job processing device of claim 17, wherein the available capacity information is indicative of the difference between a print quota associated with the user and the remaining size of all pending print jobs submitted by the user.

19. The print job processing device of claim 17, wherein the code means further includes code means for updating the available capacity information.

20 20. The print job processing device of claim 19, wherein the code means for updating the available capacity information includes code means for periodically adjusting the available capacity information of each user based on an approximation of the amount of print processing that has occurred since a previous period.

25 21. The print job processing device of claim 19, wherein the code means for updating the available capacity information is further characterized as code means for determining the actual amount of capacity required to process the user's pending print jobs.

30 22. The print job processing device of claim 19, wherein the code means for updating the available capacity information includes code means for deleting a first print job table entry

corresponding to the user responsive to determining that the user's available first printer capacity is equal to or greater than a predetermined threshold.

23. The print job processing device of claim 17, wherein the print job processing device is
5 further characterized as the first network attached printer.

24. The print job processing device of claim 17, wherein the print job processing device is further characterized as a first print server connected between the first printer and the network.